

# Defendants Guilty In Robbery, Child Sex Abuse, Drug Dealing Cases

Dominique Melton, 21, of New Castle pled guilty to Assault Second Degree, Robbery Second Degree, Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony, and Conspiracy Second Degree. Deputy Attorneys General Allison Abessinio and Michael Degliobizzi secured the plea. In March 2016, Melton, along with his co-defendant, Kerru Carter, robbed and shot their victim in the unit block of East 30th Street in Wilmington. Because he was allowed to plea to a gun charge, Melton is subject to a minimum mandatory sentence and will face between 3 and 40 years in prison when sentenced by Superior Court Judge Andrea Rocanelli in March.

Deputy Attorney General Jan van Amerongen secured a guilty plea from Ernesto Ayala, 55, of Vineland, New Jersey, to Sexual Abuse of a Child by a Person in a Position of Trust, Authority or Supervision Second Degree. Ayala assaulted a young girl in his care, touching her inappropriately, and forcing her to touch him. The abuse took place when the girl was approximately six years old. Ayala faces up to 8 years in prison when sentenced in March by Superior Court Judge Diane Clark Streett.

Deputy Attorney General Caterina Gatto secured a guilty plea from Chris Ellerbe, 31, of Newark to Drug Dealing Heroin (Class C) and Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony. In March 2016, members of the Delaware State Police Drug Task Force culminated a seven-month investigation with a search warrant at Ellerbe's home in the 200 block of West Edge Water Way. While in the home, officers found approximately 176 grams of heroin, a .25 caliber handgun, and more than \$11,000 in cash. Because he was allowed to plea to a gun charge,

Ellerbe was subject to a minimum mandatory sentence. Upon the plea, Ellerbe was immediately sentenced by Superior Court Judge Mary Johnston, to 3 years in prison, followed by 18 months of probation.